

THUNDER OF ADMIRAL EVANS' GUNS PARCHED WELLS

BRINGS WATER FROM

AT DROUGHT - CURSED MAGDALENA BAY!

A NEW phenomenon has apparently been discovered, and that is that the belching of cannons can force the earth to exude water where arid regions one reigned supreme.

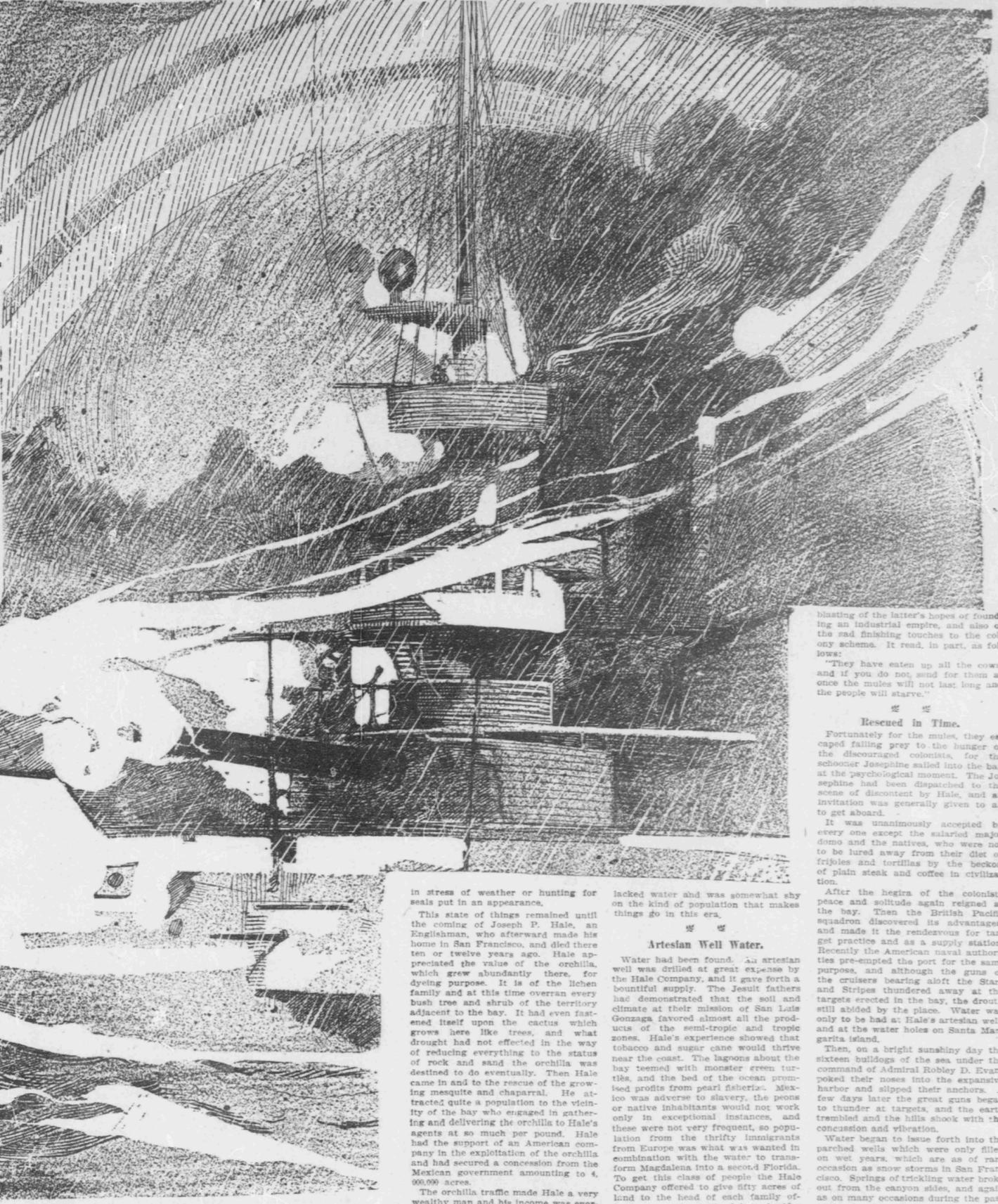
It remained for Magdalena Bay, near the southern end of lower California, to prove this to the world, according to a correspondent at that point, and the demonstration was made when Admiral Evans' big fleet of sixteen battleships visited that point for target practice.

It has long been known that water could be drained from the air by the generous use of explosives; that rain almost invariably follow-

the Magdalena bay region, took its leave. Wells that have heretofore never given forth more than a few scanty drops of water are filled with a plentiful supply and from the recesses of the barren canyons, from where water came, are the trickling streams that tell of the future glories of the land in plentiful harvests.

Ever since the story of the bay was known to man, the region about it has been a waste of sand and rock, clothed in a scanty growth of cactus, cholla, and mesquite. It was shunned by man and beast as a plague spot of the earth.

Even Missionaries Retreat.
Even the sons of Loyola, those intrepid missionaries, were compelled to retreat before this dearth of water and they went back into the interior forty-five miles, to erect the mission, which stands today and bears the name San Luis Gonzaga. When they beheld the beautiful sheet of water and gazed upon the encircling hills that shielded it from every storm, they looked into their breviaries and noted that the canon of the day was in honor of St. Mary Magdalene. With accord they chanted "Santa Maria Magdalene," and set about to lay the foundation of one of the links in the wonderful chain of missions which



ed a big battle was learned at the time of the civil war, and in the Far West rain making by exploding dynamite in the air is a recognized profession.

But where land has been arid for centuries, the surprise is that the booming of 12-inch cannons a dozen miles out at sea can force springs to crop out of the ground and the wells, long since an empty hole in the ground, to be filled with water. It seems incredible, but such are the facts vouched for by the correspondent.

MAGDALENA BAY, May 4, 1888.
WHAT magic is there in the thunder of great guns to work the transformation of a barren waste into a land of promise and cause the fountains of the earth to flow forth in abundance where only drought was known before? That is the question a few dozen of settlers on the shores of Magdalena bay, Lower California, are asking in their wonderment of science and each other.

The conclusion of other heavy artillery salvos have shaken the hills about the bay and caused the earth to tremble. For several years the British cruisers on the Pacific station have entered for target practice and since then the battle craft that flaunt the Stars and Stripes have broken the silence of this solitude with the roar of their cannon. But it was not until the great fleet under Admiral Evans belched forth its shot and shell at the improvised targets that the fell spell of drought, that for centuries has cast its curse upon

they were perfecting from La Paz, at the very point of lower California, to that of San Rafael, on the northern shores of the bay of San Francisco. In vain they searched for water. Then turning from the shores they wended their way back into the interior, and the site, upon which a temple to the honor and glory of the redoubtable Cortes to be erected, was abandoned.

The Spanish admiral, Francisco de Ulloa, was the first white man to enter the bay. He had been sent forth by the redoubtable Cortes to discover and conquer the fabled isle of Ciguatan, where Amazons ruled and reigned and guarded a mountain of priceless pearls. It was on Christmas day, 1539, that the first of the world's admirals entered the harbor, and at a glance he exclaimed with glee "Ciguatan!" But instead of Amazons he encountered the warlike and blood-thirsty progenitors of the present race of Yaquis. The pearls that he expected to find were not garnered into mountainous piles, but lay at the bottom of the sea. Added to these disappointments was the lack of water. Back in the interior, a captive native explained, was the much desired supply. But it meant traveling over a desert waste of fifty miles, confronted at every turn by hostile and ferocious Indians. The Spanish admiral angrily weighed anchor and bore away from such an inhospitable shore.

Others That Sailed Away.
The famous Cabrillo came next, only to find that his discovery was of a desert shore. Viscaño was the third and last of the great navigators that furl his sails in the bay, and he learned to his regret that there was not water to be had to replenish the casks of his ships. Then came the piratical era, when

the jolly buccaneers and their crews repaired here to evade the Spanish frigates and drift forth upon the spoils-laden galleons that came with their treasures from Peru to the west coast ports of Mexico. They excavated for water and found a limited supply on Santa Margarita Island that forms the southwest boundary of the harbor. Here were found the graves of thirty skeletons of English and Dutch buccaneers that almost a century before had engaged in mortal combat. It was the result of a quarrel over the division of the loot of some captured prize or the consequence of a drunken orgy following the celebration of one of their more successful raids for plunder. It was the custom of the freebooters who frequented the Pacific waters in those days to bear down upon their prey and after cutting the throats of crew and passengers to remove the plunder to their own holds and scuttle the captured caravel.

The Dutch and the English were particularly prominent in this industry, and the commercial caravels of Spain, then in the zenith of its glory, the chief quarry. After an adventure of this sort the freebooters cached their golden loot in the harbors along the west coast of Lower California, the most frequented of these being Magdalena bay. And many are the stories of hidden wealth buried beneath the sands that line the shore. The discovery of the graves which held the skeletons of the pirates of those days had caused no little exploitation of the region thereafter for filigree treasure. But none of it has ever been found. The skeletons which gave evidence of a hasty burial at the hands of their comrades were various metallic trinkets, which had survived the decay of the centuries that had intervened, and were of the kind worn by those engaged in the pirate trade. After the pirate era came the traders and whalers. As may be presumed,

they were "down Easters," and were given to the game of "swap," in which the unsophisticated natives came out far to the rear. These invaders, with that luck that always seems to follow American pioneering, multiplied the producing wells in the vicinity of the bay, and landing their try-out kettles and other paraphernalia to transform whale blubber into merchantable oil, they soon gave a busy aspect to conditions about Magdalena bay. In fact, it became sort of a Pacific New Bedford, and the odors of sizzling blubber considerably changed the balmy atmosphere.

There were not a few tragedies resulting from the too free use of the whaler's rum and the mesal of the natives. Quite a number of wounds marked the spot where the victims of this unholy combination were laid away to await the trump of Gabriel's horn. The wholesale raids of the harpoon raiders on the mammoth denizens of the deep in this locality soon depleted the prey, and compelled the whalers to move further north, where they located on Guadalupe Island and at San Diego. Then Magdalena bay was relapsed into its forgotten state.

Hale and His Orchilla.
Walker, the "Grey-Eyed Man of Destiny," in the furtherance of his dreams of empire, sailed into Magdalena bay. The famous filibuster concluded that it was the place for the site of his capital city. That, at least, was his first idea, and from this secure harbor he and his adventurous followers intended to make their sorties upon La Paz and San Jose del Cabo, the two cities to the south. But on second sight the filibuster chieftain soon discovered the Spectre Drought. He sailed away to meet his tragic fate in Njaragua. Magdalena bay was again forgotten by the great world, and only an occasional vessel

in stress of weather or hunting for seals put in an appearance.

This state of things remained until the coming of Joseph P. Hale, an Englishman, who afterward made his home in San Francisco, and died there ten or twelve years ago. Hale appreciated the value of the orchilla, which grew abundantly there, for dyeing purposes. It is of the lichen family and at this time overran every bush tree and shrub of the territory adjacent to the bay. It had even fastened itself upon the cactus which grows here like trees, and what drought had not effected in the way of reducing everything to the status of rock and sand the orchilla was destined to do eventually. Then Hale came in and to the rescue of the growing mesquite and chaparral. He attracted quite a population to the vicinity of the bay who engaged in gathering and delivering the orchilla to Hale's agents at so much per pound. Hale had the support of an American company in the exploitation of the orchilla and had secured a concession from the Mexican government amounting to 4,000,000 acres.

The orchilla traffic made Hale a very wealthy man and his income was enormous and continued for many years until the aniline dyes came into the market and orchilla quoted up in the hundreds of dollars a ton was not to be thought of for practical purposes. Hale saw the handwriting on the wall and he sought to develop the region about Magdalena B.Y. He had land enough to build an empire, for his original concession had been increased by grants of several millions of acres in addition to the first one, and for a time the San Franciscan reigned the absolute monarch over an area nearly as extensive as the State of Ohio. It

lacked water and was somewhat shy on the kind of population that makes things go in this era.

Artesian Well Water.
Water had been found. An artesian well was drilled at great expense by the Hale Company, and it gave forth a bountiful supply. The Jesuit fathers had demonstrated that the soil and climate at their mission of San Luis Gonzaga favored almost all the products of the semi-tropic and tropic zones. Hale's experience showed that tobacco and sugar cane would thrive near the coast. The lagoons about the bay teemed with monster green turkeys and the bed of the ocean promised profits from pearl fisheries. Mexico was adverse to slavery, the peons or native inhabitants would not work only in exceptional instances, and these were not very frequent, so population from the thrifty immigrants from Europe was what was wanted in combination with the water to transform Magdalena into a second Florida. To get this class of people the Hale Company offered to give fifty acres of land to the head of each family offering to settle at Magdalena, besides free transportation, a cow, a mule, seeds, and agricultural tools. That brought a few acres to the front. It did not take the new settlers long to discover that there was plenty of sunshine and climate, but that no one could live long on either or both of them. Then the settlers claimed they were "marooned," and a load wall went up that invited the Mexican government to investigate the cause of all the noise proceeding from the bay. Then came the appeal of Hale's maro domo, which graphically told of the

blasting of the latter's hopes of founding an industrial empire, and also of the sad finishing touches to the colony scheme. It read, in part, as follows:

"They have eaten up all the cows, and if you do not send for them at once the mules will not last long and the people will starve."

Rescued in Time.
Fortunately for the mules, they escaped falling prey to the hunger of the discouraged colonists, for the schooner Josephine sailed into the bay at the psychological moment. The Josephine had been dispatched to the scene of discontent by Hale, and an invitation was generally given to all to get aboard.

It was unanimously accepted by every one except the salaried major domo and the natives, who were not to be lured away from their diet of frijoles and tortillas by the beckon of plain steak and coffee in civilization.

After the hejira of the colonists peace and solitude again reigned at the bay. Then the British Pacific Squadron discovered its advantages, and made it the rendezvous for target practice and as a supply station. Recently the American naval authorities pre-empted the port for the same purpose, and although the guns of the cruisers bearing aloft the Stars and Stripes thundered away at the targets erected in the bay, the drought still abided by Hale's artesian well, and at the water holes on Santa Margarita Island.

Then, on a bright sunny day the sixteen bulldogs of the sea under the command of Admiral Robley D. Evans poked their noses into the expansive harbor and slipped their anchors. A few days later the great guns began to thunder at targets, and the earth trembled and the hills shook with the concussion and vibration.

Water began to issue forth into the parched wells which were only filled on wet years, which are as of rare occasion as snow storms in San Francisco. Springs of trickling water broke out from the canyon sides, and again as on many occasions during the past 125 years, the voice of the guns from the decks of American battleships exorcised the Spectre Drought as they have many other and different kinds of specters that have afflicted mankind. And Magdalena bay will now have in common with the fruitful regions about La Paz and San Jose del Cabo an abundance of water with which to bring forth bountiful harvests, and thus reverse the judgment of the old navigators who declared that instead of its being the fabulous island of Ciguatan was a desert accursed.

BLOND TYPE PEOPLE SLOWLY DYING OUT

In every country where scientific observations have been made the fair complexion proves to be dying out, says a writer in the Contemporary Review. It will vanish altogether unless the decline be checked.

Everywhere the conclusion is the same—a dark type supersedes the fair. This writer claims that the dark type offers greater resistance to disease, and has more tenacity to life, and says that the constitution indicated by light hair and eyes is not adapted to town life. Yet towns grow without ceasing at the expense of the country—77 per cent of us have already deserted the fields for street.

He believes the blonde must go, and says: "If this complexion be declining now and vanishing, those who fancy that 'the Aryan is played out' may find there a striking confirmation of their views. The fact is assured at any rate, and the cause of it ascertained; the constitution indicated by light hair and eyes is not adapted to the conditions of town life, and towns grow without ceasing at the expense of the country; the last census demonstrated an increase of 15 per cent in the ten years

preceding. Seventy-seven per cent of us already have deserted the wholesome fields for the poisoned streets.

"The same fatal process is working all over Europe, even in Russia and the Danubian principalities, always accompanied by a multiplication of the brunette type and a diminution of the blond. Perhaps it is on a calculation of the rate at which towns are increasing that Prof. Mason propounds the absolute extinction of the fair."

"Before anyone, perhaps, had concerned himself with these questions, Dr. Beddoes wrote: 'In my experience as a physician it has appeared that, on the whole dark complexioned children show more tenacity of life than fair ones under some of the unfavorable conditions of town life.' That observation is echoed from all parts of the world now.

"Where the conditions are more favorable, such as boroughs in which are large model dwellings, with plenty of open space around, the blonds seem nearly to hold their own and in the suburban areas do so with success." The conclusion is that the fair type must die out if deprived of fresh air, while

the dark suffers comparatively little. It is a striking example of natural selection and the survival of the fittest under an unnatural state of things.

"Prof. Ripley asserts that in the close neighborhood of London the average stature of people is even lower than in the metropolis, and they are darker mostly. This he attributes to the constant migration of the taller individuals who seek to 'better themselves' in town. "But the tall, as a class, are the fair; moreover, they are the more enterprising, and this rule applies to emigrants generally; the fair go, the dark, less inclined for adventure, remain to propagate their like in the mother country."

SCOTCH GOLF YARN.
From Scotland comes a golf yarn: An English visitor to Carnoustie was beginning a contest when his caddy asked to see his cigarette case and when it was handed to him coolly put it in his pocket. The visitor expostulated. The caddy responded: "It's a right, sir, I'll gie it back to ye after the round. Ye see, I've gotten hauf a crown on ye an' I dinna mean ye to smoke till ye win. Gang on, I'll take care o' ye a right!" —Chicago News.